

Community Services and Recreation

DRAFT MINUTES/APPROVED

To: Community Services Commission Members

From: Edward J. Swinkoski, Director of Community Services and Recreation

Re: Commission Special Meeting October 2, 2012

Meeting was called to order at 5:32p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Kristen Brandt, Lou Criscuolo, Kim Karlin, Paul Kottage, Donna Malley, Chris Orris, Krista Polinsky.

Absent: Marc Fasano

Staff: First Selectman, Michael J. Freda

Edward J. Swinkoski, Director of Community Services and Recreation

Maggie Goodwin, LCSW, Program Manager, Clinical Services, BHCare

Angela Belli-Infante, Secretary

1. Acceptance of Minutes of the Special Meeting held on June 5, 2012:

Lou Criscuolo made a motion to accept the Minutes of the meeting held on June 5, 2012, seconded by Krista Polinsky.

2. Correspondence:

Donna Malley indicated that she had received a copy of a resignation letter from Commissioner Jim Marshall addressed to First Selectman Michael Freda. Mr. Freda indicated that he has asked the Second and Third Selectman to collaborate on providing recommendations of candidates at the next Board of Selectman meeting.

3. Old Business:

Community Services Commission Award: In light of the commission's decision at a prior meeting in which they expressed wanting to recognize any group or individual with a certificate of recognition who have done a notable deed in the community, Donna Malley created a and distributed to the commission a draft of the nomination forms (one for submission to nominate an individual, and the other for submission to nominate a company or organization based in North Haven). Mrs. Malley asked that the commissioners review these forms and provide any proposed modifications or suggestions at the next meeting.

Outreach Fund: At the June 2012 meeting, Outreach Fund procedures and guidelines were determined and approved by the commission as they related to individual household requests. As a follow up to the discussion at the June meeting, Mrs. Malley asked how many scholarships had been awarded through the Outreach Fund since the last meeting. Mr. Swinkoski indicated that he would have the information at the next meeting. Currently, approximately \$9,600 remains in the Outreach Fund account, and no additional donations of funds have been placed in this account. Mr. Swinkoski reiterated that fund is separate from the Project Graduation fund.

Ms. Malley asked if the Outreach Funds budget could ever be increased, as these scholarship requests could feasibly draw down the account quickly. Mr. Swinkoski indicated that while the request could be made to be voted on for approval by the Board of Finance, however it had never been done in the past.

Courageous Parenting Workshop: Ms. Polinsky asked for an update from Donna Malley regarding the status on this idea. Mrs. Malley reported that Superintendent Cronin is still greatly interested in this idea but has yet been able to find the opportunity to meet to discuss it further. She also provided an overview of this idea to the new commissioners.

Substance Abuse Action Council initiatives: First Selectman Freda utilized Ms. Malley's discussion of the Courageous Parenting Workshop to springboard into a discussion highlighting the zero tolerance policy to substance abuse in Town as well as provide an overview of the initiatives the Town has taken on in order to combat the issue. Much of the initiatives originate through the Substance Abuse Action Council (SAAC). Their goal is to create a greater level of awareness of the issue, and to bring speakers in regarding the effects of substance abuse.

Additionally, through the North Haven Police Department, the presence of two drug dogs have been added at the high school level. Out of respect for students' civil liberties, the dogs have been introduced at school assemblies in an effort to send a subliminal message that the Town has a zero tolerance policy for substance abuse. Mr. Freda also mentioned that he is currently working with the Police Department in working to bring the DARE Program to the 8th and 9th grade levels.

Selectman Freda also reported on the success of the Prescription Medication Giveback program that took place at Fire Headquarters the previous weekend. This had been the third consecutive year that this annual event took place, in collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). A lengthy discussion ensued among the commissioners regarding their observations and opinions regarding the epidemic of medications being prescribed, and how it can be easily get into the wrong hands. Mr. Freda also discussed the general factors that contribute to the rise of the growing epidemic of substance abuse, as well as shared some of his own personal accounts. Maggie Goodwin, who also sits on the SAAC, also indicated that they are always looking for new individuals to sit on the council and extended the invitation to any interested commissioners. Ms. Polinsky expressed her interest and Maggie will follow up with her regarding the meeting details.

4. New Business:

Donna Malley requested that a tour be provided to the new members of the Community Services Commission. A tour will be arranged prior to the start of the November meeting.

a. Director's Report

Edward J. Swinkoski, Director of Community Services and Recreation
Community Services:

Energy Assistance: Mr. Swinkoski reported that the 2012-2013 energy assistance season started on Wednesday, September 19th. A press release went out to the media that residents are now welcome to schedule their appointments to apply. Copies of this release were distributed to the commissioners.

Appointments for North Haven residents are available on Wednesday afternoons and Thursdays mornings in the Community Services office. Mr. Swinkoski reported that 51 applications have been taken thus far this energy season. Mr. Swinkoski will provide a comparison of application statistics from the previous season at the next meeting.

Drug Disposal Event: Took place on Saturday 9/29 at Fire Headquarters. This this National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day event, scheduled by The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), was locally supported by the Substance Abuse Action Council in conjunction with our Youth Services Bureau. This annual event is a great opportunity for residents to safely dispose of accumulated unwanted, unused prescription drugs.

5 boxes of controlled and non-controlled substances were collected and to be destroyed by the DEA.

School Supplies Donation: Liberty Community Church collected and approximately 6 large boxes of school supplies and backpacks and donated to Community Services.

Monetary Donations
(June - September 2012)

Fuel Bank:

\$500.00 – NH Congregational (7/2012)

Food Bank:

\$20.00 – Tara Chiarelli (7/2012)

Food Donations:

- 4 bins of food donated by Recreation through a Zumbathon event that was hosted on September 28th. The entrance fee was either diapers for the local Diaper Bank or a non-perishable food item for our Food Bank.
- 28 bags/ 2 boxes of food donated (from June – August 2012)
- 14 bins of food from Max Sinoway food drive in May

Food Disbursements:

- June 2012: 225 meals were distributed (25 people)
- July 2012: 180 meals were distributed (= 20 people)
- August 2012: 198 meals were distributed (= 22 people)
- September 2012: 288 meals were distributed (= 32 people)

Counseling Services:

Update from Maggie Goodwin, LCSW, Program Manager, Clinical Services, BHCare

For the benefit of the new commissioners, Ms. Goodwin provided an overview of BHCare and the history of the partnership in their oversight of the counseling services within the Town's infrastructure of Community Services.

Ms. Goodwin reported that at any given time the counseling center is seeing a caseload of approximately 160-175 clients (comprised of either individual, family or group therapy sessions). She also provided a bit of detail surrounding the makeup of the staff who service the clients including the counselors, part time psychiatrist and APRNs.

Ms. Goodwin also provided some detail on the groups currently being offered (Anxiety Management Group, Substance Abuse Relapse Prevention Group, the Men's Medication Management Group and the Smoking Cessation program). The new or reconfigured groups are a Men's processing group, a Women's processing group, a Young Adults Group called Exploring the Archetypes Within, and a group therapy group focusing on Grief and Loss. Attendance at all groups has increased.

A variable number of residents have presented for benefits assistance services provided by BHcare (formerly Harbor Health Services) case management staff at the twice a month Tuesday, "walk-in" case management service.

BHcare crisis services evaluated and/or conducted emergency home visits to 7+ clients since the time of the last report.

Ms. Goodwin reported that she continues to respond to intervention requests from other town agencies (often with the Senior Center or Police or Fire Departments) and has made home visits or outreach calls to 6+ residents since the last report.

Ms. Goodwin also spent a bit of time discussing the clinical staffing situation and how it has been responded to. Since mid-February, the Counseling Center has been faced with an unexpected shortage of available clinician hours due to the extended sick-leave of a full-time clinician. In response, BHcare in conjunction with the Town has facilitated the following:

- Increased the hours of the current temporary staff clinician Donna Grisham, LADC.
- Ms. Goodwin, along with clinical staff are communicating with and responding to all clients whose services have been affected by the extended absence of the full-time clinician. Responses include re-assigning cases as indicated and managing crisis situations as they occur. While a slight lag may have occurred in the beginning, Ms. Goodwin reiterated that overall the client needs are continuing to be met.
- BHcare has assigned additional APRN (prescriber) hours to the North Haven Counseling Center which will aid in the timeliness of providing new client intakes/assessments.
- The Town's also has recruiting an additional temporary clinician, Tony Columbrito, LPC.

Youth Services:

As a follow up to a conversation at the previous meeting, Mr. Swinkoski provided the commission with details surrounding the total cost of Project Graduation 2012:

Total expense =	\$20,074.00.
- Grant monies and donations =	\$14,736.00
Actual cost to Town =	\$5,338.00

b. Finance Report

Mr. Swinkoski distributed budget reports (ending September 30, 2012) to the Commission for their review.

Daycare: 2012 YTD snapshot: Current deficit of \$47,576.14

Emergency Fund (Fund 204): as of 9/30/2012:

Food: YTD Balance \$10,144.40

Fuel: YTD Balance \$8,225.25

Misc: YTD Balance \$36,738.58

Toys: YTD Balance \$1,066.92

Outreach Fund (Fund 304): as of 9/30/2012:

Service Outreach: YTD Balance: \$9,613.44

Project Graduation: YTD Balance: \$24,079.14

5. Public Comment:

None.

6. Adjournment:

Lou Criscuolo asked for a Motion to Adjourn, seconded by Paul Kottage. The meeting was adjourned at 6:17p.m.

The next meeting will take place on November 6th. Tour of Community Services offices, Food Bank and Daycare center will begin at 4:30pm. Meeting to follow at 5:30pm.